Key of G Major

Now we are moving along, key by key. For now, we are adding what's called a sharp to the key signature for every new key. This time around, F will be sharped, while all the other notes will stay natural. Real quick, find out where all the F#s are in first position. You should have found three. If not, it's all right; just make sure you look closely at the next two scales.

The Standard G Major Scale – Example 2.1

Watch out for that 4th finger on the 4th string. Most people find their pinky finger to be "weak." It is not really as weak as you think; you just need a little more practice with control. Make sure every time you play that note, your pinky finger is as curved as the rest, and that you always land on the exact same spot on the pad of your finger. Again, make sure this scale is memorized eventually.

The Extended G Major Scale – Example 2.2

All the notes in the key of G major in first position. Again, watch out for F#. That is the only note that makes the difference between the keys G and C!

Etudes in G Major

2.3 – Another scale in 3rds. This should be practiced up the octave as well, or in other words, after you practice how it is written, practice it again but imagine that the notes are an octave higher than what is on the page. The only note that may give you trouble is the high A if you play it up the octave. Use your 4th finger to stretch to the 5th fret.

2.4 – Another little etude that simply outlines the chord progression given above. Don't worry about taking it too fast. Note accuracy is what matters at this point, not speed.

2.5 – This one is a little more fun. It uses many *non-harmonic tones* (notes that aren't a part of the chordal harmony) to create a certain sound different from your typical harmonic melody. It also incorporates legatos, which is more about technique than anything. If you haven't learned about legato playing with your technique book/instructor/(insert method here), then just ignore the slurs (also often called hammer-ons or pull-offs).

Chords in the Key of G Major – Example 2.6

I – G. Again, the root is the **I** chord. Notice that in the last key (C major), it was the **V** chord.

ii – Am. Also notice that in the last key, this was the **vi** chord. (I'll stop with this soon. This will come up and be important much later, so right now it's not like you need to be making deep inferences and correlations on your own or anything.)

iii – Bm. I really dislike this chord, and I have always played it in *barre-chord* voicing. If you want to look ahead and use just that one barre-chord for now, be my guest. But this chord works, too. I suppose.

IV – C. Once the all-important **I** in the key of C, now the lowly **IV** in G.

V – D. Also, D7. This is the really important new chord in the key of G. You could say it is the defining chord in the key of G. Every **V** chord in every key really defines that particular key very well because of that 3rd scale degree, in this case, F#.

vi – Em. Remember, this is also called the *relative minor*. So, the key of E minor is related to the key of G major via key signature. More on that later in the minor keys.

vii??? – F#???. aka, F#°. The evil vii°. This one is particularly awkward to play in open position, and is almost impossible to play unless you do it with your right hand fingers. But, a little time and practice can get your middle finger and ring finger used to muting those 4th and 5th strings.

Chord Function

I have again organized the chords we just learned into their respective classes in *Example 2.7*. So remember:

T-class: **I** and **vi**.

D-class: **V**, **V7**, **vii°**, and sometimes **iii**

P-class: **IV** and **ii**

NOTICE: the new chords are all in the D-class! Why is that? Very simple: they all contain the leading tone, or the new note, F#. Wow. So, if a basic chord has the leading tone, it's a D-class chord. Basically. I say "basically" referring to the fact that this applies to basic chords only. So Gmaj7 is NOT a D-class chord in G major because it's a G chord first and foremost.

ALSO NOTICE: The "old" chords in C major that are no longer in G major used to be in the P-class. So, where F and Dm used to be in the key of C, they are no longer in the key of G. And they so happen to contain the note F, which is the 4th scale degree in C major, which is now F# in G major, so they are not in G major. I could go on and on, but I think I have made myself clear.

This isn't a coincidence; when we move on to the next sharped key (D major), we will see this pattern happen all over again.

Cadence review: *Examples 2.8-11*

It's time to review your cadences. Now they are in the key of G. Remember what Roman numerals go with each cadence? Write them in.

Basic Chordal Etudes in G Major

Here I have printed the exact same chord progressions as before, only now they are **transposed** into G major. So, the basic harmonic map is the same (the first progression is still **I -> vi -> IV -> V**), but the chords are now in G major. They give a similar "feel" as they did in C major, only just "tweaked."

2.12 – Again, here is the "Pop/Rock" chord progression, only this time transposed to the key of G major. If you are already getting sick of playing the same chord progressions over and over, don't worry; I will have new chord progressions in the upcoming keys.

2.13 – Yet again, the "Classical" chord progression, using sequential root movement, only now in the key of G major. Here's a good time to review what I meant by "sequential root movement" in case its definition didn't pop into your head.

2.14 – And finally, the good ol' 12-Bar Blues, now in G. The blues is found in pretty much every key imaginable, so certain keys from here on out will still contain the 12-Bar Blues, even though it may seem to have been beaten to death already. There's just so much you can do with it, and there are many things that still have yet to be done.

More Advanced Topics

Again, if just the open chords and basic melodies are giving you a tough time, then feel free to move on to the next key and then come back to the advanced topics once you've mastered more keys and gained more experience playing the guitar.

Functional Chords - The Four (or five or so) Seventh Chords – Example 2.15

Here are the most common 7th chords in the key of G major. Remember the four (or five) different types of 7th chords: major 7, minor 7, dominant 7, and diminished 7 (full and half diminished). We're not focusing too much on the diminished 7 chords for right now, so in the chord sequence I have written out a fully diminished 7, while *Example 2.17* has a half-diminished 7. Just follow the fingerings and it will be ok.

Notice that the resolution line for D7 -> Em doesn't actually go anywhere. This is because that particular note in the D7 chord always resolves up; it's the 3rd, so it must resolve up. That's the big deal with 7th chords: <u>the 3rd resolves up and the 7th resolves down</u>. But, going to Em, there is no note to resolve to. The correct note is a whole octave below where it should be (the G). So, it's technically a bad resolution. It was already a deceptive resolution, and now it simply doesn't resolve to the right notes. What I may prescribe is that you actually put a high G, 3rd fret on the 1st string, in the Em chord. This will resolve it more "purely." But, again, it's really all up to the musician, so if you think a normal D7 chord resolving to a normal Em chord sounds fine, then that's OK with me. I just thought I'd point out that little inconsistency.

Also you may notice a bracket ([ ) in the fingering for the F#°7 chord. This indicates a barre, or where your first finger lays flat and frets multiple strings. If you can play it, great, but if not, it's not a big deal right now.

7th Chord Etudes in G Major

And now for more of the same progressions, with 7th chords in the key of G major.

2.16 – Here's the "50s" chord progression (aka "Pop/Rock"), more elaborated, and with the **ii7** -> **V7** -> **I** progression (assuming you either take the repeat or end on **I**).

2.17 – Now for the "classical" progression, elaborated with 7th chords, and containing that nasty half-diminished chord. Like you did last time, try to find out the pattern of chord-tone 7ths resolving down and chord-tone 3rds resolving up.

2.18 – And finally, the 12-Bar Blues yet again, now in "jazz" form. But to change things up a little, and to throw you into the concept of "borrowed" chords a bit, I have included one chord that does not fit into the key of G major. It should be obvious which one it is because if you wrote it out, it would have an accidental. Can you think of any reasons why I might have put in this chord? We'll talk more about this idea of "borrowed" chords as we complete our knowledge of the keys, but in the meantime, keep on the lookout for the occasional "borrowed" chord.

Functional Chords – "Sus" Chords – Example 2.19

Again we find our good friends, the "sus" chords. You may notice that many of the "sus" chords work in the same way as they did in the key of C major, now they're just in a different order. Remember the rules for preparing and resolving these chords…what were they again?

One thing I must mention is my inclusion of G7 -> Csus4 -> C. This is not in the key of G major because it has an F natural. It has been "borrowed" from the key of C major. This is probably the most common example of this, but you might be able to think of others. For example, try preparing and resolving Dsus4 to Dm instead of D. Sounds weird? That's why they are used rather sparingly. Whenever you want to "borrow" a chord from a different key, it is always important that you establish the "home" key (in this case, G major) soon afterwards and very firmly. In other words, follow it with a strong cadence, like **V7** -> **I**.

You also may notice that in the progression C -> Dsus4 -> D, the "sustained" tone jumps up the octave (the two notes that are "tied" or in this case more like "slurred" together). This is technically not a suspension because the note is different between the two chords, but on the guitar, it works in a similar fashion. So while not "classically" correct, it gives the modern listener the same experience as a "normal" suspension.

Practice the previous chord progressions while including as many or as few "sus" chords as possible, remembering to always follow the rules first, then be more creative afterwards.

Color Chords – "Add" Chords – Example 2.20

Now for the "add" chords in the key of G major. Review what "color" chords mean. Try to incorporate them in progressions you already know.

Power Chords – "No 3rd" or "5" Chords

The good thing about going key by key like we are is that you're really reviewing most of the time and only building on what we've already learned. In the case of power chords, we are only going to learn one new chord, B5, and we're getting rid of F5 because of

the new note F#. But be sure to take a look at *Exercise 2.21* first before learning the new chords.

Power Chord Etudes in C Major

2.22-25 – Here we have the same 3 progressions as last time in the key of C major, only now in the key of G major. Notice how closely the same basic movements are made as in the key of C, only now they are at a different part of the fretboard.

Find as many songs as you can in the key of G major (or what look like to have the chords in G), and practice those or substitute power chords in for those. Or better yet, try to take the songs you learned in C and transpose them to the key of G! (Not a requirement for now.)

Extended Power Chord Techniques

The 5 -> 6 -> 7 -> 6 Chord Shuffle

I did not include an example of this technique because I want you to try to play the 12-Bar Blues (*Example 2.25*) using this technique on your own. The same chords will be used as last time in the key of C major, but one new chord, D5, will be used. Remember, you're using the same basic "riff" or finger movement, but you're moving that entire shape from chord to chord. Only use the "riff" pattern on chords G5, C5, and D5; the rest can be played as normal power chords.

Inverted Chords as Quasi-Power Chords for Smooth Bass Movement – *Example 2.26*

The same routine is presented as in the key of C major, but this time around the new chord D/F# will be used. Notice that the **V** chord is the new chord; this will always happen as we move to each newly sharped key.

Sus2 Power Chords – *Example 2.27*

And finally we have the "sus2" power chords in G. Again, most are the same as last time, only now we have E2 and no more F2. We still don't have B2 because it has a C# on top, which will be in our next key, D major.

What to do next

Now it is time to do one of two things: either compose your own progressions and melodies in the key of G major, or go out and find music in the key of G major and analyze and play it to the best of your ability. Go ahead and write out the Roman numerals, or transcribe exactly what you plan to play. Don't be afraid to do your own substitutions; play power chords instead of open chords, or use "sus" chords or "add" chords when they sound right. Just make sure that, if you are with a band, they know the changes you've made.